

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

284 State Street, SHS 41

Augusta, Maine 04333

www.mefishwildlife.com



Our affordable admission fees have remained the same for 7 years!

January 2015

Dear WILD Teacher:

Thousands of children, teachers and chaperones have participated in exciting, enriching and educational wildlife and conservation programs and guided tours at the **Maine Wildlife Park in Gray** and on **Swan Island in the Kennebec River in Richmond**. We need your business to keep these unique facilities available, so we truly hope to see you this coming Spring and Fall! Remember, register your classes early! NEW Activities to use before, during and after your trip, can be downloaded from: www.maine.gov/ifw/education/schools_teachers/field_trips_park.htm#infopacket

* Regular Wildlife Program fees for **Maine Wildlife Park** and **Swan Island** are **\$5** per person. Fees apply to students, teachers, chaperones and others accompanying the class, and includes general admission to each facility. There are picnic areas and plenty to see and do before and after your scheduled program or tour -- [especially using the NEW downloadable activities available!!](#)

Maine Wildlife Park programs are held outdoors, under our open-sided pole barn shelter suitable for seating up to 90 children at picnic tables. These programs are held rain or shine, so dress for the weather!

*The Nature Store offers 1 FREE PASS for a future park visit to any child, who is part of a group admission, that makes a purchase of \$1 or more in the store! The Snack Shack is full of affordable (many less than \$1) items.

Revenues from both help support the park and its wildlife.

2015 Maine Wildlife Park Special Offer

This year we are again able to offer FREE ADMISSION to the first 300 children signed up for a wildlife education program or tour at the wildlife park for Spring 2015 only. Teachers, Parents & Chaperones must pay the regular program group rate admission fee of \$5.00pp.

Swan Island programs start with an open boat ride across the river, then a 10 minute open truck ride 1/4 of the way down the Island to the campground. Programs are held inside the campground boathouse or outdoors, depending on the weather and/or the program. Dressing for the weather is essential. Island programs may be cancelled in the event of pouring rain, thunder storms or river flooding.

2015 Swan Island Special Offer

Thanks to another special grant from the **Merrymeeting Bay Trust**, we are able to offer FREE ADMISSION to the first 400 children signed up for a wildlife education program for Spring or Fall 2015.

Teachers, Parents & Chaperones must pay the regular program group rate admission fee of \$5.00pp.

Ferry Transportation is included in this offer. First come, first served!

Please make every effort to be on time for all programs!! We understand that bus schedules vary, but please build in time for slower buses, morning traffic and finding your way to a new location. Better to make an early arrival with enough time to use the rest rooms, than get to the program late!

HOW TO REGISTER

You may register for all wildlife education programs at both facilities by calling 207-287-5244.

Reservations by Email are not accepted.

We cannot hold any regular or free reservation! You should be ready to commit to a date when you call.

If you need to be invoiced, please request one at the time you make a reservation!

All reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

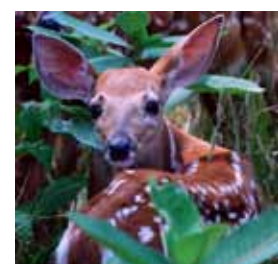
If you'd like to explore Swan Island independently with your students, truck tours the length of the Island for up to a maximum 25 total participants are available on Thursdays & Fridays for \$8 PP. Overnight Camping is also available. Call the **Swan Island Reservation Line** directly FOR TRUCK TOURS or CAMPING RESERVATIONS ONLY at 207-547-5322.

FMI - Email: Swan.Island@Maine.gov

We are looking forward to seeing you and your students at the Maine Wildlife Park and/or Swan Island for exciting and informative wildlife and conservation education programming.



Sincerely,
Lisa J. Kane
MDIFW Education Coordinator



www.mainewildlifepark.com

www.maine.gov/swanisland

Wildlife Program Descriptions

A Look Inside a Fish

What's a coldwater fish? What's a warmwater fish? What's the difference? What do fish eat, where do they live, how many species do we have in the state? Learn about their external physical adaptations for their lives underwater, then get a chance to inspect a fishes' internal organs. An unusual demonstration and hands-on activity for your students.

Animals' Amazing Adaptations

Maine wildlife exhibits an amazing variety of physical characteristics that enable them to survive and do their jobs within their environment. Learn about Maine habitats, why moose and deer grow antlers, why birds have different shaped bills, why turtles have varied body shapes and appendages, how camouflage benefits those animals that exhibit it, and more! Compare and contrast entirely different 'jobs' wildlife do while sharing the same habitats.

Birds and Their Adaptations

Using mounted specimens of songbirds, raptors and waterfowl, we'll identify the many different adaptations birds exhibit to blend into their particular habitats. Looking at color, beaks, feet, feathers, diet and migration habits, we will learn how and where to find a variety of species of birds, and how to enhance certain habitats for 'birdlife', and wildlife in general. Then go test your knowledge as you tour the park.

Eagles, Osprey & Owls

Using mounted specimens of eagles, osprey and owls, we'll discuss the different life histories of these impressive raptors. Why are some more common than others? How have pollution and contaminants affected them? In what habitats do we find them in Maine? What unique adaptations does each species utilize to capture its prey and survive? Why do some migrate while others stay the winter? How are they & their habitats protected?

Endangered and Threatened Species

How many animals are endangered or threatened in Maine? Why are they at risk? How does the continuing loss of habitat effect their populations? What is being done to preserve and protect golden eagles, peregrine falcons, piping plovers and box turtles-even freshwater mussels and burying beetles? Maine's endangered list has changed-bald eagles are off the list completely, while the New England cottontail, 3 bat species, the Black-crowned night heron and several others have been included.

If You Care, Leave Them There

Spring is the time that most baby animals and birds are born. Quite often, people find young wildlife in their backyards and back woods, and don't know what to do. We want to help, but there are many, many do's and don'ts when faced with the dilemma of a baby robin just saved from the cat's jaws, or that young fawn alone in the woods, apparently abandoned. Find out how YOU and your students can best help wildlife in these and many more situations.

Life and Death of a Small Maine Town (Swan Island ONLY)

Swan Island was originally a town in and of itself, know as Perkins Township. With 5 standing homes dating back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a cemetery with headstones dated 1802-1968, the entire island listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and a legacy of ship building, farming, ice harvesting and more; this is a fascinating exploration and look back in time. This is a wonderful Social Studies field trip!

Life of the Loon

Loons are a common symbol of the wilderness in Maine. Listen to and learn about their natural history, how contaminants like lead and mercury are affecting them, and how lead fishing tackle causes illness and death for many birds in Maine. Students will learn how they can help protect our loons! Several mounted specimens of loons will be used during this program, as well as audio tapes of loon calls and color photos.

Maine's Big Cats

Maine is home to Canada lynx and bobcats. Rarely seen in the wild, learn about the lifestyles of these 2 elusive species of cat. Although a verifiable photograph or video of a mountain lion has yet to be taken, hundreds of reports of cougars are recorded annually with the Department, and several tracks have been found that could be in the range of a small mountain lion or large bobcat. Wildlife biologists are continually on the lookout for these secretive felines, follow up solid reports in the field, and conduct track surveys each winter.

Maine's Black Bears

Using skulls, skins, mounts and samples of radio telemetry equipment, we'll help your students take a closer look at the natural history, current research and management of Maine's black bears. Does this state really have the most bears of any east of the Mississippi? Do bears really hibernate? Can they run 35-40 miles per hour? Do they have cubs only every other year? Are their favorite foods really nuts and berries? Are Maine's black bears the biggest in the country? Your students can observe and photograph black bears climbing, swimming and interacting in their large exhibit here.

Maine's Busy Beavers

Beavers are the only animal that can create its own habitat, or place to live. They are abundant in Maine, and have an interesting life cycle. Using mounted specimens, skins, skulls and beaver 'chaw', we will explore the world of the beaver, identify its many physical adaptations, take a look at the animals' place in US and Maine history, and investigate the status of Maine beaver populations today.

Maine's Native Turtles

Using live and preserved turtle specimens, we'll talk about many of the 10 species of land, aquatic and marine turtles found in Maine. Learn about their natural history, the Maine habitats in which they are found, and some of the threats facing turtles (many are endangered or threatened). Students will be able to meet live wood and box turtles; and learn how they might be able to help turtles survive in Maine.

Maine's State Symbols

Did you know that Maine has a state animal, state flower, state insect, state fish, state cat and even a state soil? If you are working on a Maine Studies unit with your students, this program provides a variety of current and background information about the natural resource symbols used to represent Maine geographically to the rest of the country, and the world.

Meet a Live Bald Eagle

Two bald eaglets from 2 separate nests in the Sebago region fell or blew out of their nests during the wild and wet weather of spring 2005. Both suffered permanent injuries to their wings, making it impossible for them to be released back into the wild. These birds are now learning to be 'program birds' as a part of live presentations to groups. Come and learn about eagles in Maine, and at the end of the program, meet a now 10-year old eagle, mature with a white head and tail, as he continues his career greeting and meeting the public.

Nature Walk on the Beaver Pond Trail: (Swan Island ONLY)

Take a walk around the beaver pond on this approximately 1 mile loop. Check out wetlands, duck nesting boxes, songbirds, insects; ID trees, flowers and other plants; roll over old logs to look for salamanders, and whatever else we can find to examine along the trail. Make sure to bring your 5 senses!

Owls and Owl Pellets

Learn about barred, great horned and saw whet owls, where to find them in Maine, some of their unique adaptations, the habitats in which they live, and their interesting production of owl pellets! Pellets are regurgitated fur/feathers and bone comprised of the birds' last meal. Each tableful of students will have the chance to dissect a dried pellet and look for the bones of the mouse the owl last ate! A great subject for studying anatomy and physiology.

Predators!

Why are we so fascinated by predators? Lynx, mink, wolf, mountain lion, loon, eagle and more are all at the top of their food chains and integral parts of the ecology. What happens when predators are eliminated from a food chain? Can wildlife that has been 'extirpated' from an area be reintroduced? How do humans' attitudes towards predators influence their ability to survive within a region? Using a variety of mounted specimens, furs and skulls, learn about a variety of predators and their population status in Maine and the northeast.

Skins and Skulls

The coyote, red and gray fox, bobcat, lynx, fisher, marten, raccoon, skunk, short and long-tailed weasel, mink, otter, beaver, muskrat and opossum are all considered furbearers in the state of Maine. Learn about these animals' natural history, how to determine whether teeth indicate a carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore, to identify and study skulls and skins, about their population status and habitat requirements in the state. Become a wildlife detective at the end of the program when each table of students is given a mystery skull and skin to identify.

Trees and Wildlife

All wildlife needs food, water, shelter and space to survive in their habitats. Trees play an important role in providing food & shelter for birds, mammals, reptiles & even fish! Learn how trees are used by a variety of different wildlife for feeding, nesting, roosting, camouflage & more!

Wetland Metaphors

Using this popular Project WILD Aquatic activity, students will first learn about the benefits and functions of wetland habitats for wildlife and for people, hike around a wetland area, then demonstrate their new knowledge by participating in the hands-on 'WILD' activity.

What's Legal and What's Not? Wildlife Artifacts, Parts and Pieces

Have you ever found a feather, a bird nest, or a deer antler while out wandering in the woods? Were you aware that some of those items may be illegal for you to posses?? There is a tremendous worldwide black market in wildlife parts and pieces; they are used, mostly illegally, for decorations, jewelry, medicines, or as a part of religion and cultural ceremonies. Come and find out what's legal for you to keep, and what's against the law for you to possess. You may be very surprised to learn you might be breaking laws enacted to protect wildlife, both in Maine, throughout the US, and the world.

Wild Turkeys -- they're back!

Wild turkeys were once completely eliminated from Maine - extirpated - but due to efforts of IFW biologists & the Wild Turkey Federation, have made a dramatic comeback. Learn about this large gamebird, its natural history and how biologists manage its populations today.

Wolves and Mountain Lions

Both of these large predators have been extirpated, or eliminated from Maine. In fact, the last of each species was killed by the late 1800s in Maine. For the last several years, however, dozens of sightings have been reported here; but no verifiable photographs, videos or other evidence has confirmed it. Are they really here? Is there appropriate habitat for them? Could they survive as viable populations? Natural history, current attitudes and wildlife management options will be discussed.




2015 Maine Wildlife Park & Swan Island

Wildlife & Conservation Education Programs
Call 287-5244 to reserve dates and times
\$5.00pp fee for all group programs & tours

MAY 2015



SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		WILDLIFE PARK SUMMER EVENTS
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
	www.maine.gov/swanisland				1	2	TBA 11am-2pm	
	4	5 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	6	7 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	8	9	↓ International Migratory Bird Day	
	11	12 Skins and Skulls 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	13	14 Maine's Busy Beavers 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	15 Endangered Species Day	16		
Mother's Day	18 Life & Death of a Small Town 10-10:45 - 50 students	19 Owls & Owl Pellets 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	20 Maine's State Symbols 10-10:45 - 50 students	21 Maine's State Symbols 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	22	23	Friends of the Wildlife Park Annual Plant Sale Great Deals on Annuals & Perennials & Support the Park!	
Friends of the Wildlife Park Annual Plant Sale All Weekend!	25 Holiday NO PROGRAM Memorial Day	26 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	27 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 50 students	28 Life of the Loon 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	29	30		
	www.maine-wildlifepark.com							

JUNE 2015

SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		WILDLIFE PARK SUMMER EVENTS
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
	1 Skins and Skulls 10-10:45 - 50 students	2 Meet a Live Bald Eagle 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	3 Life & Death of a Small Town 10-10:45 - 50 students	4 Wolves & Mountain Lions 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	5	6	TBA 11am-2pm ↓	
	8 Wetland Metaphors 10-10:45 - 25 students 11-11:45 - 25 students	9 Maine's Big Cats 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	10 Maine's Big Cats 10-10:45 - 50 students	11 Maine's Native Turtles 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	12	13		
	15 Maine's Busy Beavers 10-10:45 - 50 students	16 Meet a Live Bald Eagle 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	17 Wolves & Mountain Lions 10-10:45 - 50 students	18 Maine's Black Bears 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	19	20		

Swan Island Wildlife Programs

Richmond Landing, Kennebec River, Routes 197/24

All wildlife programs are on Mondays and Wednesdays. Buses must arrive with students ready to board the ferry to the Island by 9:30 a.m. Students will then ride our island tour truck to the campground area. Wildlife programs will begin promptly at 10:15 a.m. at the Boathouse.

From 11:15am to your departure time, classes can picnic and explore the Island on their own. Departure times for everyone must be prearranged. Bring lunches, snacks & beverages to hold you over until you are back on the mainland.

PLEASE NOTE: The Island is open to you and your students for an Independent Field Trip or a guided Truck Tour on Thursdays and Fridays! To make a reservation, contact the Island directly at: 547-5322 or email: Swan.Island@maine.gov

Maine Wildlife Park Wildlife Programs

Route 26, Gray

All wildlife programs are on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, rain or shine, in the pole barn classroom shelter.
Please dress for the weather!


Maine Wildlife Park Guided Tours

Guided tours are available Monday through Friday for one group of up to 30 children, 1st grade and up.
Reservations are required; call 287-5244 to reserve a tour.



2015 Maine Wildlife Park & Swan Island
SEPTEMBER 2015



SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		WILDLIFE PARK FALL EVENTS	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday			
		1 www.mainewildlifepark.com	2	3	4	5 TBA			
	7 Holiday NO PROGRAM Labor Day	8 Trees and Wildlife 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	9 Life & Death of a Small Town 10-10:45 - 50 students	10 Predators! 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	11	12			
	14 Trees and Wildlife 10-10:45 - 50 students	15 Skins and Skulls 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	16 Endangered & Threatened Species 10-10:45 - 50 students	17 Endangered & Threatened Species 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	18	19			
	21 Life & Death of a Small Town 10-10:45 - 50 students	22 Meet a Live Bald Eagle 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	23 Eagles, Osprey & Owls 10-10:45 - 50 students	24 Maine's Native Turtles 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	25 	26			
	28 Maine's Busy Beavers 10-10:45 - 50 students	29 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	30 Animals Amazing Adaptations 10-10:45 - 50 students	www.maine.gov/swanisland					

OCTOBER 2015

SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		SWAN ISLAND		WILDLIFE PARK		WILDLIFE PARK FALL EVENTS	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday			
	www.mefishwildlife.com			1 Wolves & Mountain Lions 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	2	3 TBA			
	5 Skins and Skulls 10-10:45 - 50 students	6 Skins and Skulls 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	7 Birds & Their Adaptions 10-10:45 - 50 students	8 Birds & Their Adaptations 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	9	10			
	12 Holiday NO PROGRAM Columbus Day	13 Meet a Live Bald Eagle 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	14 Owls & Owl Pellets 10-10:45 - 50 students	15 Owls & Owl Pellets 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	16	17			
	19	20 Maine's State Symbols 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	21	22 What's Legal & What's Not? Wildlife Artifacts 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	23	24			
	26	27 Wild Turkeys 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	28	29 Moose, Deer, Bear Maine's Big Game 10-10:45 - 75 students 11-11:45 - 75 students	30	31 Halloween			

A NATURE STORE SPECIAL OFFER!!
The wildlife park nature store has a variety of items for less than \$1. One FREE PASS for a future park visit (a \$5 value) will be given to any child, who is part of a group admission, that makes a purchase of \$1 or more at the store!

VOLUNTEERS! Do you have any extra time? The wildlife park is always looking for interested volunteers to lead weekday morning tours for school children. If you are interested, please call the park @ 657-4977 x 0 to learn about the next training sessions we will be offering. Retired Teachers are welcomed!!

BE ON TIME!!!
Please make every effort to be on time for all programs and tours! We understand that bus schedules vary, but please build in enough time for slower buses, morning traffic and finding your way to a new location. Better an early arrival, with enough time to use the restrooms, than a late one!!!

PLEASE COUNT YOUR MONEY AND YOUR KIDS!!
Please know the total number of people in your group (teachers, parents, kids) and have the admission/tour fees counted out prior to your arrival. Counting bags of change on the Island dock or at the Park admissions gate only DELAYS YOUR PROGRAM, and others who are waiting to enter.